

RUTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

*Quarterly*



**HARD HAT HISTORY ISSUE**

The Rutland Historical Society, Inc. is a non-profit corporation chartered by the State of Vermont to serve the needs of the four communities which comprise the original township of Rutland: the City of Rutland and the towns of West Rutland, Rutland and Proctor.

The Society operates a Museum at 101 Center Street from May through October. Workshops and meetings are held the evenings of the third Sunday of each month from November through April.

Staff of the *Quarterly*: Editor—F.P. Elwert. J. J. Cullina, Jon Mayo, Jake Sherman.

Officers of the Society elected at the annual meeting October 1974.

President	Arch J. Todd, Rutland Town
Vice-president	Lincoln M. Fenn, Rutland City
Treasurer	George J. Covalt, West Rutland
Secretary	Dr. James J. Cullina, Rutland City

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And what is "hard hat history"? It is the pioneering aspect of history. It operates in that shady area where the present blends into the past; where junk becomes artifact; where an insignificant pamphlet, book or poster becomes primary historical source material. It is history on the firing line; history with rolled-up sleeves and dirty finger nails; it is history, literally, wearing a hard hat.

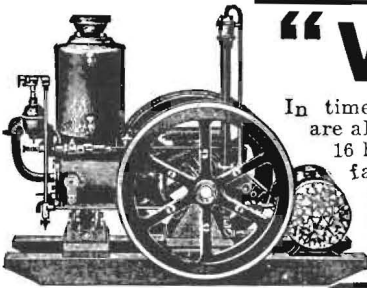
Its practitioners work in the cellar hole and the bottle dump; in the second-hand book store, the flea market and the attic and the cellar. Its field ranges such disparate categories as oil paintings and barbed wire—and 'most everything in between. It is broad enough to support dealers, mechanics, restorers, craftspeople and trained academicians, as well as a sizeable fringe of sharpers, hucksters and frauds. Though essentially nonintellectual it yet demands knowledge both deep and highly specialized. Its most demanding requirement is a shrewd, intuitive sense of discrimination in winnowing out among bushels of trash that which is simply junk and those trashy-looking items which are historically priceless. In today's ecology-minded framework, it is re-cycling with a vengeance.

Hard hatters include the rich, the blue collar worker and the impoverished and, yes, the rapacious—those who Oscar Wilde described as knowing the price of something but not its value.

The hundreds upon hundreds of museums, collections and archives existing today would be considerably fewer—and poorer were it not for these hardy souls. May they long pursue their individualistic ways!

*The cover: Bertha and Paul Whittemore's 1928 Ford brougham.*

John A. Graham, first lawyer in Rutland and a free-wheeler later in New York City, deserves the attention of the scholar-historian. Noel Perrin, head of the English Department, Dartmouth College, would like to have material by or information about Graham.



## **“VERMONT”**

In time of need “The Vermont” Gasoline Engines are always ready. They need no adjustment. 3 to 16 horse power, mounted or stationary, for farm, factory and shop use. Write for catalogue E.G., describing the most reliable engine made.

**STODDARD MANUFACTURING CO., Rutland, Vt.**

**We have a few new Fairbanks Engines at a bargain. Ask for description.**

### **... the gas engine**

The gas engine reigned supreme on the farm as motive power for the thresher, the saw rig and the milking machine in the days before rural electrification. The most noble machine of its type is the Abenique, made in Westminster. These one-cylinder machines fire only when the fly wheel slows down below a predetermined number of revolutions per minute. Dick Pratt of Clarendon is shown with a Stoddard, made in Rutland several generations ago.

One of the disciplines in the broad field of hard hat history is the restoration of old automobiles. The known practitioners of this art who live in the four Rutland communities are shown on the next two pages. If owners of old houses or furniture took the same pains that antique car buffs do, we would not see the daily loss of irreplaceable landmarks.



Richard & Marsha Littler  
1931 Ford Model A  
*Tudor sedan*



Wally & Sherry Sietz  
1931 Ford Model A  
*Tudor sedan*



Wally & Joan Brunelle  
1929 Ford Model A  
*Tudor sedan*



John & Helen Horvath  
1931 Ford Model A  
*Sports coupe*



Brian & Jane Webb  
1929 Ford Model A  
*Standard coupe*



Robert & Laura McCroskey  
1931 Ford Model A  
*Deluxe coupe*



Paul & Bertha Whittemore  
1928 Ford Model A  
*Brougham. Body by Briggs*



Jimmy Mihuta  
1929 Ford Model A  
Pick-up



Allison Reuling  
1931 Ford Model A  
Coupe



John Elwert  
1931 Ford Model A  
Pick-up



Lloyd Davis  
1923 Franklin coupe  
air cooled



Hugh G. Barclay  
1929 Ford Model A  
Phaeton



Fred Elwert  
1931 Chevrolet  
Station wagon



Gil Godnick  
1936 Packard  
Sedan



Iconography - the study of things as represented in pictures—is a fascinating experience, whether it be a collection of post cards, an album of prints, or a room covered with choice oil paintings and lithographs.

Portraiture of the famous or obscure tells us much of the subject. Here is a camera study of Rutland's most distinguished woman, Julia Caroline Ripley Dorr with her grand-daughter and namesake, Julia Caroline Ripley Dorr Panman. The photograph is from the Dorr-Steele family album owned by Mrs. Dorr's great-grandson, Robert Gilmore Steele, and used by permission.



Our knowledge of the mastery of the violin of Rutland's mayor, Jack Carder (1) is probably lost forever unless, through some fortuitous chance, an old disc or cylinder comes to light. However, many of his paintings still survive. This one, a view of Otter Creek from the old Billings Road, is one of several owned by Mrs. Paul Jubelt of Wolcott, Connecticut, and is reproduced with permission. The skillful mastery of composition is obvious. Unfortunately, the coloring—a bland, serene blend of yellows, light green and blue is not apparent in this reproduction. The work of Jack Carder deserves a wider public and we hope someday to bring this about.

(1) see the *Quarterly*, Vol. IV, p. 8.

### Alice M. Young 1917-1974

We are saddened by the recent death of Miss Young who for many years was chief operator at the local telephone office. In her memory her friends have presented to the Society a purse which the Society will use to acquire material relating to the industry in which our Member was so long active.

## Book Reviews

*Vermont Album* . . . text by Ralph Nading Hill. Brattleboro: Stephen Greene Press (1974) 144pp. illus. cloth: \$12.95.

Reviewed by Robert Edward West

The pages of *Vermont Album* will be perused again and again by Vermonters interested in seeing, through a remarkable collection of 216 photographs, what life was in nineteenth century Vermont.

Through these photographs one can see more vividly than historians can portray through words alone what farming, quarrying and logging were in that earlier time.

The principal interest of the *Album* lies in the photographs—yet many are too small to be appreciated fully. Extensive use of “bleeding” could have resulted in far better pictures; an oblong-shape would also have permitted greater enjoyment from larger pictures.

Ralph Hill and his collaborators succumbed to an unfortunate tendency to be coy with some of the pictures and text. With limited space available, the editors wasted some on pictures they could not authenticate as to identity of persons or place. Hill compounded this with trite captions which say no more about Vermont than the pictures. His text, in general, is disappointing in that a great deal more could have been said in describing Vermont during that period. Pictures alone can be as uncommunicative as some prose, and the editors’ (or Hill’s) decision to make this an album in a restrictive sense cheated us of what could have been a vastly more illuminating work if greater care had been taken to make the text more informative than entertaining.

*Attorney West, an avid iconographer of the State, is Defender-General of Vermont.*

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*Fences, Gates, and Bridges*. . . edited by George A. Martin has just been re-issued by the Stephen Greene Press. This is by no means a modern book—it is a reprint of the 1887 edition and should easily serve two purposes. We in the Society, for one, find it a welcome reference work for our mounted and labelled collection of barbed wire presented last fall by Dr. C. A. Burt of New York City. There have been so few innovations in fencing since the book was first published that today the book can readily serve as a guide for building a fence or a gate or a bridge.

### Julia C. R. Dorr—a further report

The lead article in the December 1974 issue of *National Antiques Review*, published in Portland, Maine (Box 619) is by one of our Members, Barbara B. Chiolino. “The Evolution of Santa Claus” features the back and front covers of a scarce toy book edited by Mrs. Dorr and published by Tuttle in 1882. Only two copies of this little fragile work are known, one being in the Vermont State Library. The other, owned by Mrs. Chiolino, was loaned to the Society for display in the Dorr exhibit this summer. The last stanza of the poem “Santa Claus” from *Poems*, N.Y., 1901 concludes the article.



## Two Hundred Years Ago . . .

Colonel John Murray, one-time speculator in the New Hampshire grant township of Rutland, and prominent merchant and citizen of Rutland, Massachusetts, has been driven from his home by the Whigs and is living in Boston, safeguarded by His Majesty's regiments under General Thomas Gage.

A neighbor of Murray's, Paul Revere, rides on the 12th of December to Colonel John Sullivan in Durham, New Hampshire to inform him that the British are about to re-inforce Fort William and Mary in Portsmouth harbor. Sullivan's men, in the first aggressive military action of the Revolution, overpower the small garrison, remove a considerable quantity of munitions, and send it to Concord, Massachusetts for safe-keeping.

